

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 CU-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 EB-07
COME-00 TRSE-00 /079 W
-----190004Z 059753 /20

R 181018Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2689
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSULATE MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CZ
SUBJECT: PRAGUE REGIME FAWNS ON CORVALAN

1. SUMMARY: CZECHOSLOVAK POLITICAL FIGURES UP TO AND INCLUDING
CPCZ GENERAL SECRETARY GUSTAV HUSAK FELL ALL OVER THEMSELVES TO
BE SEEN WITH AND PAY HOMAGE TO CHILEAN CP LEADER LUIS CORVALAN, WHO
ARRIVED IN PRAGUE MAY 11. IT SEEMED TO US THAT, AS A GROUP AND AS
INDIVIDUALS, MEMBERS OF THE SINGULARLY LACKLUSTER CZECHOSLOVAK
REGIME WERE HOPING SOME OF CORVALAN'S APPARENT CHARM WOULD
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RUB OFF ON THEM. END SUMMARY.

2. CPCZ CC PRESIDUM MEMBERS VASIL BILAK, ANTONIN KAPEK AND
JOSEF KEMPNY ACCOMPANIED BY PARTY SECRETARIES JAN FOJTIK AND
OLDRICH SVESTKA MET CORVALAN AND HIS FOLLOWING AT AIRPORT MAY 11.
3. HUSAK RECEIVED CORVALAN AT HRADCANY MAY 12, AND DECORATED HIM

WITH ORDER OF KLEMENT GOTTWALD IN PRESENCE OF BILAK AND KEMPNY, AS WELL AS KAPEK, JAKES, FOJTIK, HAVLIN, VAVRUS AND HUSAKS CHEF DE CABINET JOSEF HAMAN. TELEVISED FILM OF HUSAK RECEIVING CORVALAN SHOWED HUSAK AT HIS MOST ANIMATED, ALMOST BUBBLING WITH HAPPINESS TO BE TALKING WITH CORVALAN.

4. CORVALAN APPEARED IN THE PRESIDENTIAL BOX WITH HUSAK AT THE PRAGUE SPRING OPENING CONCERT MAY 12. AUDIENCE ROSE AND GAVE HIM THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE.

5. ON MAY 13, CORVALAN WAS PARADED AROUND TO HEADQUARTERS OF THREE PRAGUE-BASED ORGANIZATIONS, WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS, INTERNATIONAL UNION OF STUDENTS, AND EDITORIAL OFFICES OF PROBLEMS OF PEACE AND SOCIALISM (WORLD MARXIST REVIEW) TO RECEIVE APPROPRIATE HONORS.

6. TAKING ADVANTAGE OF CONGRESS OF CZECH JOURNALISTS IN PRAGUE MAY 13-14, CORVALAN CONSULTED WITH TOP RADIO, TV AND PRESS REPRESENTATIVES MAY 14. FOLLOWING DAY HE TOURED KLDNO AND LIDICE, WHERE HE APPEARED IN PONCHO AND KISSED BABIES. BRATISLAVA GAVE THE SAME ACT A BIG TURNOUT MAY 16. DATE OF HIS DEPARTURE HAS NOT YET BEEN ANNOUNCED.

7. COMMENT: WE ARE STRUCK BY APPARENT EAGERNESS OF REGIME FIGURES TO BE REPORTED AS HAVING MET WITH CORVALAN, AND BY STRESS, IN OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS OF CORVALAN'S REMARKS, ON HIS GRATITUDE FOR CZECHOSLOVAK "SOLIDARITY" WITH CHILEANS STRUGGLING AGAINST JUNTA. WITHOUT A DOUBT, CORVALAN COMMANDS RESPECT AND AFFECTION AMONG MANY CZECHOSLOVAKS. THE HUSAK REGIME EVIDENTLY HOPED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS TO BOLSTER ITS POPULARITY AT HOME. MEANWHILE, CORVALAN JOKES HAVE GAINED NEW CURRENCY IN PRAGUE; WE HAVE LATELY HEARD SEVERAL, FOR EXAMPLE, SALESGIRLS IN A PRAGUE DEPARTMENT STORE DISCOVER A SMALL BOY FROM THE COUNTRYSIDE WHO IS LOST. THEY ASK HIM HIS NAME, WHERE HE IS FROM AND WHAT HIS PARENTS LOOK LIKE, BUT THE BOY CAN REMEMBER NOTHING. IN DESPAIR THEY ASK IF THERE IS ANY NAME HE REMEMBERS, AND THE BOY MURMURS, "CORVALAN." END COMMENT.
BYRNE

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, OVIP, CZ, CI, (CORVALAN, LUIS)
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